

<sup>1</sup>IN THE FIFTEENTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF  
TIBERIUS CAESAR, PONTIUS PILATE BEING GOVERNOR OF JUDEA,  
AND HEROD BEING TETRARCH OF GALILEE, AND HIS BROTHER  
PHILIP TETRARCH OF THE REGION OF ITURAEA AND  
TRACHONITIS, AND LYSANIAS TETRARCH OF ABILENE,  
<sup>2</sup>DURING THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD OF ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS,  
THE WORD OF GOD CAME TO JOHN THE SON OF ZECHARIAH  
IN THE WILDERNESS. <sup>3</sup>AND HE WENT INTO ALL THE REGION  
AROUND THE JORDAN, PROCLAIMING A BAPTISM OF  
REPENTANCE FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. <sup>4</sup>AS IT IS WRITTEN  
IN THE BOOK OF THE WORDS OF ISAIAH THE PROPHET,  
“THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS:  
‘PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.

.001.tiff

<sup>5</sup>EVERY VALLEY SHALL BE FILLED, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL  
SHALL BE MADE LOW, AND THE CROOKED SHALL BECOME  
STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH PLACES SHALL BECOME LEVEL WAYS,  
<sup>6</sup>AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD.”  
<sup>7</sup>HE SAID THEREFORE TO THE CROWDS THAT CAME OUT TO BE  
BAPTIZED BY HIM, “YOU BROOD OF VIPERS! WHO WARNED YOU  
TO FLEE FROM THE WRATH TO COME? <sup>8</sup>BEAR FRUITS IN  
KEEPING WITH REPENTANCE. AND DO NOT BEGIN TO SAY TO  
YOURSELVES, ‘WE HAVE ABRAHAM AS OUR FATHER.’ FOR I TELL  
YOU, GOD IS ABLE FROM THESE STONES TO RAISE UP CHILDREN  
FOR ABRAHAM. <sup>9</sup>EVEN NOW THE AXE IS LAID TO THE ROOT OF  
THE TREES. EVERY TREE THEREFORE THAT DOES NOT BEAR GOOD  
FRUIT IS CUT DOWN AND THROWN INTO THE FIRE.” —LUKE 3:1-9

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THE JORDAN RIVER HAS DEEP HISTORICAL  
ROOTS WITHIN JEWISH TRADITION. IT IS THE  
RIVER THAT THE ISRAELITES CROSSED TO  
ENTER THE PROMISED LAND, REPRESENTING  
A TRANSITION FROM THE WILDERNESS  
TO A NEW BEGINNING. BY CHOOSING THIS  
SPECIFIC LOCATION FOR HIS BAPTISM,  
JESUS CONNECTS HIS MISSION TO THE  
HISTORY OF HIS PEOPLE, REINFORCING  
THE IDEA OF A NEW COVENANT.  
THE RIVER SERVES AS A POWERFUL  
BACKDROP FOR THIS TRANSFORMATIVE  
EVENT, SYMBOLIZING PURIFICATION  
AND THE WASHING AWAY OF SINS.

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## I. DECLARATION OF JESUS' MESSIANIC IDENTITY (LUKE 3:3-6)

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<sup>15</sup>AS THE PEOPLE WERE IN EXPECTATION, AND ALL WERE QUESTIONING IN THEIR HEARTS CONCERNING JOHN, WHETHER HE MIGHT BE THE CHRIST, <sup>16</sup>JOHN ANSWERED THEM ALL, SAYING, "I BAPTIZE YOU WITH WATER, BUT HE WHO IS MIGHTIER THAN I IS COMING, THE STRAP OF WHOSE SANDALS I AM NOT WORTHY TO UNTIE. HE WILL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE. <sup>17</sup>HIS WINNOWER FAN IS IN HIS HAND, TO CLEAR HIS THRESHING FLOOR AND TO GATHER THE WHEAT INTO HIS BARN, BUT THE CHAFF HE WILL BURN WITH UNQUENCHABLE FIRE." —LUKE 3:15-17

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<sup>16</sup>FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. <sup>17</sup>FOR GOD DID NOT SEND HIS SON INTO THE WORLD TO CONDEMN THE WORLD, BUT IN ORDER THAT THE WORLD MIGHT BE SAVED THROUGH HIM. <sup>18</sup>WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM IS NOT CONDEMNED, BUT WHOEVER DOES NOT BELIEVE IS CONDEMNED ALREADY, BECAUSE HE HAS NOT BELIEVED IN THE NAME OF THE ONLY SON OF GOD. ...  
<sup>36</sup>WHOEVER BELIEVES IN THE SON HAS ETERNAL LIFE; WHOEVER DOES NOT OBEY THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE, BUT THE WRATH OF GOD REMAINS ON HIM. —JOHN 3:16-18, 36

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LUKE 16:17-31

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2. DESIGNATION OF JOHN'S PRIESTLY DUTY  
(LUKE 1:5-17)

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THE NEXT DAY HE SAW JESUS COMING TOWARD HIM,  
AND SAID, "BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO  
TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!" —JOHN 1:29

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3. DEPICTION OF CHRIST'S SUBSTITUTIONARY  
AUTHORITY (MATTHEW 3:13-17)

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... <sup>6</sup>WHO, THOUGH HE WAS  
IN THE FORM OF GOD,  
DID NOT COUNT EQUALITY  
WITH GOD A THING TO BE  
GRASPED, <sup>7</sup>BUT EMPTIED  
HIMSELF, BY TAKING THE  
FORM OF A SERVANT,  
BEING BORN IN THE  
LIKENESS OF MEN. <sup>8</sup>AND  
BEING FOUND IN HUMAN  
FORM, HE HUMBLLED  
HIMSELF BY BECOMING  
OBEDIENT TO THE POINT OF  
DEATH, EVEN DEATH ON A  
CROSS. —PHILIPPIANS 2:6-8

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4. DESCRIPTION OF THE HOLY TRINITY  
(LUKE 3:21-22)

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<sup>21</sup>NOW WHEN ALL THE PEOPLE WERE BAPTIZED, AND WHEN JESUS ALSO HAD BEEN BAPTIZED AND WAS PRAYING, THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED, <sup>22</sup>AND THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCENDED ON HIM IN BODILY FORM, LIKE A DOVE; AND A VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN, "YOU ARE MY BELOVED SON; WITH YOU I AM WELL PLEASED."  
—LUKE 3:21-22

.013.tiff

<sup>3</sup>BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO HAS BLESSED US IN CHRIST WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES, <sup>4</sup>EVEN AS HE CHOSE US IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS BEFORE HIM. ... <sup>7</sup>IN HIM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR TRESPASSES, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE, <sup>8</sup>WHICH HE LAVISHED UPON US, IN ALL WISDOM AND INSIGHT <sup>9</sup>MAKING KNOWN TO US THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL, ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE, WHICH HE SET FORTH IN CHRIST ... <sup>13</sup>IN HIM YOU ALSO, WHEN YOU HEARD THE WORD OF TRUTH, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION, AND BELIEVED IN HIM, WERE SEALED WITH THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT, <sup>14</sup>WHO IS THE GUARANTEE OF OUR INHERITANCE UNTIL WE ACQUIRE POSSESSION OF IT, TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY. —EPHESIANS 1:3-4, 7-9, 13-14

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## 5. DEMONSTRATION OF YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

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<sup>36</sup>AND AS THEY WERE GOING ALONG THE ROAD THEY CAME TO SOME WATER, AND THE EUNUCH SAID, "SEE, HERE IS WATER! WHAT PREVENTS ME FROM BEING BAPTIZED?" <sup>38</sup>AND HE COMMANDED THE CHARIOT TO STOP, AND THEY BOTH WENT DOWN INTO THE WATER, PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH, AND HE BAPTIZED HIM. <sup>39</sup>AND WHEN THEY CAME UP OUT OF THE WATER, THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD CARRIED PHILIP AWAY, AND THE EUNUCH SAW HIM NO MORE, AND WENT ON HIS WAY REJOICING. —ACTS 8:36-39

.016.tiff

“BEING BAPTIZED BY JOHN,  
JESUS DECLARED THAT  
HE WAS FULLY COMMITTED  
TO HIS MISSION AND  
PREPARED TO TAKE ON  
THE SINS OF WORLD.  
HIS ACT OF SUBMISSION  
SHOWS US WE MUST ALSO  
TAKE STEPS OF FAITH,  
EVEN BEYOND OUR  
COMFORT ZONES.”  
—JOHN PIPER

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• BAPTISM IS THE FIRST STEP OF DISCIPLESHIP

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<sup>18</sup>AND JESUS CAME AND  
SAID TO THEM, “ALL  
AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND  
ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN  
TO ME. <sup>19</sup>GO THEREFORE  
AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL  
NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM  
IN THE NAME OF THE  
FATHER AND OF THE SON  
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
<sup>20</sup>TEACHING THEM TO  
OBSERVE ALL THAT I HAVE  
COMMANDED YOU. AND  
BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU  
ALWAYS, TO THE END OF THE  
AGE.” —MATTHEW 28:18-20

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“FOUR MARKS OF TRUE REPENTANCE ARE:  
ACKNOWLEDGING WRONG, WILLINGNESS TO CONFESS IT,  
WILLINGNESS TO ABANDON IT, AND WILLINGNESS  
TO MAKE RESTITUTION.” —CORRIE TEN BOOM

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• BAPTISM IS A DEMONSTRATION OF LORDSHIP

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WE WERE BURIED THEREFORE WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH, IN ORDER THAT, JUST AS CHRIST WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD BY THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, WE TOO MIGHT WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE. —ROMANS 6:4

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“THE EARTHLY FORM OF CHRIST IS THE FORM THAT DIED ON THE CROSS. THE IMAGE OF GOD IS THE IMAGE OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED. IT IS TO THIS IMAGE THAT THE LIFE OF THE DISCIPLES MUST BE CONFORMED; IN OTHER WORDS, THEY MUST BE CONFORMED TO HIS DEATH (PHIL. 3.10, ROM. 6.4). THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS A LIFE OF CRUCIFIXION (GAL. 2.19). IN BAPTISM THE FORM OF CHRIST’S DEATH IS IMPRESSED UPON HIS OWN. THEY ARE DEAD TO THE FLESH AND TO SIN, THEY ARE DEAD TO THE WORLD, AND THE WORLD IS DEAD TO THEM (GAL. 6.14). ANYBODY LIVING IN THE STRENGTH OF CHRIST’S BAPTISM LIVES IN THE STRENGTH OF CHRIST’S DEATH.” —DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

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• BAPTISM IS AN AFFIRMATION OF FELLOWSHIP

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SO THOSE WHO RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE  
BAPTIZED, AND THERE WERE ADDED THAT DAY  
ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS. —ACTS 2:41

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TEXT “BAPTISM” TO  
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